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Promotion and protection of human rights

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Letter dated 12 October 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you the attached statement (see annex) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic, dated 9 September 2015, on the local self-government elections held on 13 September 2015.

I kindly request that the present letter and its annex be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 34, 71 and 72, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Zohrab **Mnatsakanyan**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 12 October 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Along with aggravating the situation on the line of contact and making repeated attempts at reconnaissance and sabotage, as well as continuously shooting with large calibre mortars and artillery, the Azerbaijani authorities have launched a hysterical campaign against the ongoing democratic processes in the Nagorno Karabakh Republic.

On 31 August, the Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry issued a statement condemning the forthcoming local self-government elections of 13 September in the Nagorno Karabakh Republic. That statement, which contains the traditional set of baseless accusations against the Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Armenia, was actively disseminated in international organizations and structures. In their turn, the State-controlled Azerbaijani media have started a race in their attempts to obtain similar accusations from the representatives of various countries and international organizations.

Condemnation of the municipal elections in the Nagorno Karabakh Republic by Azerbaijan is a manifestation of the panicked phobia of the Azerbaijani leadership towards the democratic processes taking place in the Nagorno Karabakh Republic. This is especially evident against the background of the deteriorating situation with regard to human rights and freedom of speech in Azerbaijan, in which elections are an open-ended process of inheritance, human rights activists and journalists are persecuted for dissent, and the population is deprived of the opportunity to fully realize its fundamental rights and freedoms. Bringing to an end any illusion of democracy in its country, the leadership of Azerbaijan is not giving up on the attempt to impose its own "standards" of human rights throughout the international community, including in neighbouring countries.

In this regard, we consider it necessary to note that, in line with its commitment to democratic values and principles, the organization of public life and the formation of the authorities of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic are carried out solely by means of free, fair, transparent and competitive elections, which have become an integral part of the political culture of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic.

The forthcoming elections of 13 September are the sixth elections for the local government in the Nagorno Karabakh Republic. The first municipal elections, including the election for the mayor of Stepanakert, were held on 27 September 1998.

The implementation of local self-government in the Nagorno Karabakh Republic, which safeguards the citizens' direct participation in the conduct of public affairs, is regulated by the Constitution of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic, in full compliance with international law and particularly the European Charter of Local Self-Government.

Attaching special importance to the institution of local self-government as a form of direct and representative governance by the people and the foundation of any democratic regime, the authorities of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic will spare no effort to enhance its further development and strengthening.